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Security Council

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Tuesday, 6 November 2007, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Wirajuda	(Indonesia)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	Congo	Mr. Okio
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Ghana	Mr. Christian
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Qahtani
	Russian Federation	Mr. Shcherbak
	Slovakia	Mr. Bartho
	South Africa	Mr. Sangqu
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Mr. Khalilzad

Agenda

The role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security

Letter dated 29 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/640)

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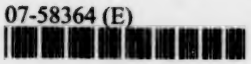

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

The President: At the outset, I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to His Excellency Mr. Leslie Kojo Christian, Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of October 2007. I am sure that I speak for all members of the Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Christian for the great diplomatic skill with which he conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security

Letter dated 29 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/640)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Norway, Philippines, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Spain, Uruguay and Viet Nam, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I should like to draw attention to document S/2007/640, which contains a letter dated 29 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration.

I welcome the participation of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, at this meeting, and invite him to take the floor.

The Secretary-General: I pay tribute to the delegation of Indonesia, in particular to Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda, for convening this open debate on the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. The fact that the Security Council is holding its second open debate this year on this issue demonstrates the importance that the Council rightly attaches to it, as reflected in resolution 1631 (2005).

Since taking office 10 months ago, I have noted the important contributions of a number of regional and subregional organizations, and I have participated in the deliberations of some of their summit meetings. These interactions have been useful occasions to build a common forum and agenda for cooperation. They will also help to inform the report that the Council has asked me to prepare on ways the United Nations can advance coordination with regional organizations in Chapter VIII arrangements.

Today, our partnerships with regional and subregional organizations are stronger and more active than ever. This year alone, we have established a joint African Union-United Nations peacekeeping force and political mediation in Darfur, and we are consulting on the situation in Somalia. We have cooperated with the European Union in the protection of civilians in Chad and the Central African Republic. We have worked with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations on Myanmar. We have partnered with the Economic Community of West African States in elections and political situations in West Africa. We have worked with NATO in Afghanistan and Kosovo. We have collaborated with the Organization of American States in support of the electoral process in Haiti. We have held regular consultations with the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the League of Arab States on conflict resolution in the Middle East, Africa and Asia. And we have worked with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the European

Union in addressing peace and security concerns in Europe and elsewhere.

These policy and operational activities, spanning conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, are delivering results on the ground as well as lessons for the future. They provide us with a better understanding of our respective strengths and advantages. They have made it possible to respond more quickly at the outset of a crisis and more effectively in post-conflict peacebuilding. We need to build on these strengths and together find better and more efficient ways of tackling global challenges.

The United Nations is committed to helping build up the capacity of regional and subregional organizations to undertake conflict-prevention, peacemaking and peacekeeping tasks in their respective regions. My proposals to the General Assembly to strengthen the Department of Peacekeeping Operations have already reinforced its capacity to work with peacekeeping partners. Similarly, I have presented proposals to the General Assembly for strengthening our Department of Political Affairs. Both illustrate my commitment to enhance the Organization's ability to work with regional partners. By the same token, we are enhancing mediation capacity within the Secretariat and providing resources for initiatives such as the 10-year capacity-building programme for the African Union.

We are determined to work more closely and more efficiently together for the mutual benefit of our organizations and Member States and, above all, for the peoples of every region of the world.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than five minutes, in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate the text in writing in the Chamber and to deliver condensed versions when speaking.

Mr. Khalilzad (United States of America): Mr. Minister, I would like to thank you for convening this meeting on the very important and timely issue of the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. I welcome the Secretary-General's presence and his comments.

We share the goal set forth for this meeting and the Indonesian concept paper, namely, to discuss the existing and potential capacities of these organizations in the field of peace and security and to identify and develop modalities by which to enhance cooperation between these organizations and the United Nations, including the Security Council.

While the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security remains with the Security Council, regional and subregional organizations play an important role in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. This role is clearly spelled out in Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, and its importance has been emphasized in various Council resolutions and presidential statements.

Regional and subregional organizations often have first-hand understanding of the underlying causes of local conflicts. They understand the local norms and cultures and, in many cases, have enormous influence over the parties in dispute. It is in the Security Council's interest, and that of the United Nations in general, to work with these organizations to prevent conflicts and to resolve them once they occur. The United States supports voluntary contributions to fund the work of the regional organizations.

The Security Council has asked the Secretary-General for a report on how the United Nations can better support arrangements for further cooperation and coordination with regional organizations. We look forward to the Secretary-General's report.

Today, I would like to highlight some of the important contributions of regional organizations. First, I would like to focus on the important role that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) plays in promoting peace and security in South-East Asia and beyond. For 40 years, ASEAN has helped to create an environment in South-East Asia that has encouraged dialogue and progress and enabled the countries of the region to resolve differences and problems peacefully and positively. ASEAN is working to stand by itself as an organization, which we applaud. As it moves ahead, one of its main challenges will be dealing with the problems and the threat to regional security posed by one of its members. ASEAN's bold statement on 27 September on the brutal crackdown on

peaceful protestors and Buddhist monks in Burma demonstrated to the military regime the organization's deep concern over its abuses of the political, economic and human rights of the Burmese people. ASEAN made clear that these gross violations do indeed affect the stability of the region.

Secondly, I would like to address the important role of subregional organizations in mitigating conflict in Africa. The African Union (AU) is playing a critical role in Darfur. The United States commends the continuing commitment and contribution of the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) amidst the casualties it has suffered in the face of the violent attacks in Darfur. We also applaud the important and continued role that the AU is playing with its participation in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). The role of the AU is critical for the successful transition of AMIS to UNAMID. We look forward to close cooperation with the AU, and we view its role in UNAMID and in garnering political support for its deployment and operations as an excellent example of the importance of regional organizations in mitigating conflict in Africa.

Thirdly, the European Union (EU) is also contributing to peace and stability in Africa. On 25 September the Security Council approved the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), a multidimensional presence consisting mostly of United Nations civilian police and EU peacekeeping troops. MINURCAT's objective is to protect the refugees and internally displaced persons in the area. Its ultimate goal is to create security conditions conducive to a voluntary, secure and sustainable return of refugees and displaced persons. We commend the involvement of the EU in this effort.

Fourthly, the Organization of American States (OAS) has played an indispensable role in facilitating peace processes and promoting stability in the Western Hemisphere. In Haiti, for example, the OAS mission has played a central role in helping to maintain stability following the resignation of President Aristide, and its technical experts provided crucial support in facilitating the elections and the re-establishment of a democratic government that followed. Furthermore, the ongoing efforts of the OAS will result in the establishment of a permanent electoral registry for the first time in Haiti's history.

Fifth, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) has helped to build democratic institutions and promote human rights and non-violent conflict resolution. OSCE election monitoring represents the gold standard for international observation missions. The Unites States continue to strongly support OSCE activities and believes its standards and commitment offer positive examples for consideration by other regional organizations.

We would also like to pay tribute to the contributions of the Gulf Cooperation Council, the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and other regional organizations to the maintenance of international peace and security.

In conclusion, we recognize that regional organizations will play an increasing role in the way we solve peace and security issues. We also recognize that, just as there are differences in ways that various regional organizations help to maintain international peace and security, the Security Council must be flexible in its approach to working with them, based on the unique facts of each case. Cooperation with regional organizations can and will take many forms.

The Security Council must work with regional and subregional organizations to enhance their capacity and ability to deal with the various challenges they face. As noted in the draft presidential statement, the Council should also consider how to further strengthen interaction and cooperation with these organizations in accordance with the United Nations Charter, taking into account the proposals of the Secretary-General. That cooperation will be essential to enabling early responses to disputes and emerging crises and to fulfilling this body's responsibility to maintain international peace and security.

Mr. Spatafora (Italy): First of all, I wish to thank you, Mr. Minister, for organizing this debate on such a vital issue. It is an honour to have you among us today in the Security Council. Thank you for the very well-focused concept paper, which by itself highlights the centrality of this issue. We welcome you. We are always very pleased to have the Secretary-General among us. We like to think that he is one of us.

Italy fully aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Portugal on behalf of the European Union (EU). I shall limit myself to some supplementary remarks.

Italy attaches the greatest importance to the role in the maintenance of international peace and security assumed by regional and subregional organizations. We look with favour to the definition of more-incisive modalities to deepen their cooperation with the United Nations, and thus we welcome your initiative, Mr. President. We also welcome the initiatives that the Secretary-General referred to earlier.

Regional organizations should be involved in every stage of peacekeeping, from preventive diplomacy to troop deployment and peacebuilding activities in a broad sense, from disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to security sector reform and consolidation of rule of law. This is because they are the main stakeholders in their respective geographic areas. Regional organizations, as Ambassador Khalilzad has already said, actually know local realities better and have direct interests in the solution of crises that risk having negative repercussions on the region. Here, I would like to highlight the point I have already made, that regional organizations should be involved from the beginning of the process — not just arrive when things have already been prejudged, in a sense.

While the United Nations continues to bear the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the multiform and interconnected nature of threats and challenges requires that the international community take a global, collective and multilateral approach. The new missions, which often combine more and more civilian and military dimensions, involve complex tasks. The Chad operation is just one example of how these multidimensional operations now constitute the new pattern for new needs. Activities range from peacekeeping to monitoring the implementation of peace processes, military consultants and assistants, police work, monitoring the borders, the rule of law and the defence of human rights. An effective response thus assumes action in which all the international subjects, starting with the regional and subregional organizations, are as united and coordinated as possible and able to offer added value.

Italy, which promoted the European security strategy during its 2003 EU presidency, looks with favour on the strengthening of cooperation between the EU and the United Nations based on the joint declaration of June 2007, which follows on and updates the one adopted under the Italian presidency in September 2003. The operations that the EU conducted in the Balkans under a Security Council mandate and its experience with the Democratic Republic of the Congo have been useful testing grounds.

It is time to focus on the implementation of these strategic decisions. The mission in the Central African Republic and in Chad is a new example of the way the EU assumed the responsibility towards the United Nations and enhances a strong and focused cooperation with the African Union. We are working along these lines to strengthen coordination mechanisms between EU member States on the Security Council to undertake more effective action by the EU.

The Peacebuilding Commission is a body that brings together, in country-specific meetings, all the significant actors in a specific country, including the regional and subregional organizations. The Peacebuilding Commission therefore represents a model for interaction between the United Nations system and regional and subregional organizations, whose potential has to be exploited to the maximum for the promotion of integrated peacebuilding strategies. There are enormous potentialities in that regard that we must not miss.

Finally, we attribute particular relevance to capacity-building in regional and subregional organizations, especially in the area of homogenous standards, respect for shared principles and lessons learned from the most recent peacekeeping experiences. In that context, ways to assist regional organizations should be explored that do not necessarily provide for the use of troops, such as greater assistance in the areas of logistics, intervention planning and training.

With regard to training in particular, Italy contributes, through structures of the Centre of Excellence for Stability Police Units, to strengthening the capacities of the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in the police component of peace operations.

What I mean to say is, that if we enhance the role of regional and subregional organizations, we have to focus at the same time on building the capacity of those regional and subregional organizations. Otherwise, this is just a rhetorical exercise.

Mr. Al-Qahtani (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, Mr. Minister, I have the pleasure to welcome

you to New York. I am also pleased to see you presiding over the Council. We wish your delegation every success in its presidency of the Council for this month. I should also like to thank you for choosing the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security as the theme of our open debate today. That was an especially timely choice given that the role of regional and subregional organizations is being marginalized and belittled.

The diversity of the political, cultural, economic and social characteristics of the world's regions necessitates that we attach priority and give special importance to the regional perspective in addressing crises. Such a regional perspective is provided by the numerous regional and subregional organizations that exist throughout the world. Conscious of that fact, the authors of the Charter of the United Nations devoted Chapter VIII to the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. That constitutes the basis for a collective security system. The regional perspective contributes to a deeper sense of participation, consensus and democratization in the role of international organizations. Recently, however, that role has somehow been imperilled.

Some members of the Security Council have realized that danger and have called for the convening of several open meetings on the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. Resolution 1631 (2005) and numerous presidential statements have also been adopted to underscore the importance of cooperation with regional and subregional organizations and of making use of them for the purposes of preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping, peacemaking and post-conflict peacebuilding.

Today's meeting comes at a time when there are suspicions regarding the Security Council's desire to promote partnerships with regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. Despite all the meetings that have been held and the passage of 60 years since the inception of the collective security system, we must again recall that the Charter reserved a principal role for regional arrangements in the maintenance of international peace and security. The Charter also called for recourse to regional organizations in containing disputes and resolving conflicts under Chapter VIII. Indeed, the Charter gives priority to regional organizations in settling regional disputes.

In order to preserve intact the collective system of international security, the Security Council must cooperate with regional arrangements in a concrete manner. At a time when the role of some regional organizations is being marginalized or ignored completely, the Council must avoid selectivity and double standards in dealing with regional and subregional issues. Yet, history and reality do not make us optimistic that there is a genuine partnership between the Security Council and regional organizations in every case.

We need to preview this situation and must take a firm stand to collectively achieve our lofty goal of maintaining international peace and security. Moreover, in order to re-energize the Security Council's open debates on this matter, it is our hope that future Council resolutions that refer to cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations will be adopted under Chapter VIII of the Charter. Regional organizations must be given priority in resolving regional conflicts. They must have logistical, political and financial support as an explicit acknowledgement of the existence of a genuine partnership with those organizations, not merely a partnership of ideas that are irrelevant or unrealistic.

In addition to cooperating with the United Nations, regional and subregional organizations of which my country is a member — including the League of Arab States and the Gulf Cooperation Council — are trying to prevent conflict and to settle disputes by peaceful means. The Security Council, for example, has not given the necessary attention to initiatives by those regional organizations vis-à-vis the question of Palestine and resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict. Some members of the Council have even belittled the importance of Arab initiatives in that regard. That illustrates the selectivity that exists with respect to the role of regional organizations.

Attention has recently been focused on cooperation between regional organizations and United Nations organs, especially the General Assembly, which has granted observer status to a number of regional and subregional organizations by virtue of their role in the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security. In that regard, I should like to refer to draft resolution A/C.6/62/L.7,

which is before the Assembly's Sixth Committee and which would grant observer status to the Gulf Cooperation Council, which cooperates with international organizations and plays a regional role in preventing and resolving regional and international disputes. A very important summit to discuss vital issues regarding international peace and security will be held at Doha in December.

Vicious political campaigns have been waged last year and this year against enhancing the role of regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. Those campaigns did not spare the African Union (AU), despite the memorandum of understanding signed at the beginning of this year between the AU and the United Nations on their 10-year partnership. Political reasons stood in the way of providing logistical and financial support for the AU missions in Darfur, Sudan, and in Somalia. That has hampered the role of that regional organization, and does not contribute to resolving crises and achieving stability in those two countries. What we have seen in Somalia is an example of the failure of the international Organization to promote partnership and collective security with relevant regional organizations in order to maintain international peace and security.

In conclusion, we would like to express our support for the draft presidential statement put forth by the delegation of Indonesia, which is to be adopted at the end of this meeting once our suggestions have been taken into consideration.

Mr. Sangqu (South Africa): We would like first to express our appreciation to you, Sir, for participating and presiding over this meeting today. We also welcome the presence of the Secretary-General at this meeting.

We welcome this opportunity to once again deliberate the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. We commend Indonesia for presenting us with another opportunity to further discuss this issue, which is becoming increasingly central to our collective efforts to maintain international peace and security.

Over the past few years, the role of regional organizations in the maintenance of peace and security has become increasingly prominent, representing, in our view, a fuller articulation of the provisions of the Charter. Experience has shown that cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations can enhance the maintenance of international peace and security. However, that active role of regional organizations should not be perceived as absolving the United Nations, in particular the Security Council, of its Charter-mandated responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security. In that regard, we reiterate our belief that we should coordinate our collective security efforts through the United Nations.

Regional organizations bring advantages to the maintenance of international peace and security, including through their proximity and an informed understanding of specific conflict situations. Those organizations have greater flexibility to intervene, especially during the initial stages of conflict, and can also be involved in mediation efforts when conflicts arise.

The African Union has intervened in some situations in which the United Nations has been unable to intervene, as well as in situations in which rapid interventions by the United Nations have been necessary but not possible. In some cases, the United Nations processes take a long time to finalize at a time when security situations on the ground are deteriorating. In such situations, regional organizations can mitigate those shortcomings on the part of the United Nations through rapid response and intervention.

The African Union has developed mechanisms to seek durable peace and sustainable development on the African continent. The African Peace and Security Architecture, launched in 2002, includes mechanisms such as the Peace and Security Council, a Continental Early Warning System, a Panel of the Wise, an African Stand-by Force and a Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Framework. Those mechanisms articulate a wide range of underpinning norms and values, all aimed at engaging in conflict prevention, resolution and post-conflict reconstruction. It should be noted that the protocol that established the African Peace and Security Council also specifically stipulates that

> "in the fulfilment of its mandate in the promotion and maintenance of peace, security and stability in Africa, the Peace and Security Council shall cooperate and work closely with the United Nations Security Council".

At the subregional level, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) continues to play a critical role in ensuring subregional stability. In that context, its Organ on Politics, Defence and Security has undertaken mediation efforts in quelling potential conflicts. SADC has also recently launched the SADC Brigade consisting of military, police and civilian components from all SADC member States, which will form part of the African Union Stand-by Force for rapid deployment should the need arise.

The scope for regional peace operations is limited by the lack of funds and logistical capabilities. Fundamentally, the lack of predictable, sustainable sources of funding often hamper well-conceived and well-timed peacekeeping initiatives, with disastrous implications for the communities affected by conflict. It is for this reason that the African Union has requested the United Nations to explore the possibility of funding, even through assessed contributions, peacekeeping operations that have been deployed with the consent of the United Nations. It is imperative that, as we further define the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, we be bold and ambitious in further exploring viable approaches to the question of cost-burden sharing. After all, peace and security in Africa are an integral part of global peace and security. Both the causes and consequences of conflict and instability in Africa have a significant linkage with global developments and relations in the international arena.

The recent adoption of resolution 1769 (2007) by the Security Council, deploying the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), gives practical expression to the partnership between the African Union and the United Nations, which we hope will go a long way in providing a strong basis for strengthened cooperation between the two organizations. UNAMID represents one of the innovative models of cooperation whereby the African Union and the United Nations can collaborate politically, logistically and financially to resolve one of the intractable conflicts of our time.

My delegation looks forward to the report of the Secretary-General, as requested by the Security Council in document S/PRST/2007/7, which we hope will include clear proposals on enhancing the relationship with regional organizations, including exploring ways on cost-burden sharing for maintaining international peace and security. Without such clear proposals, the report will not succeed in further advancing the debate beyond the scope of mere rhetoric. What is required are practical steps and concrete proposals on the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security.

In conclusion, we reaffirm our belief that closer cooperation with regional organizations strengthens the implementation of Security Council decisions by widening the collaborative effort of all interested parties in achieving a desired outcome. It is for that reason that we are pleased to be discussing ways and means of enhancing the role of regions in support of the Security Council. Our discussions here will serve as a useful resource on which we could build as we try to find solutions.

Lastly, we support the issuance of the presidential statement prepared by the delegation of Indonesia.

Mr. Okio (Congo) (*spoke in French*): My delegation thanks you, Sir, for taking the felicitous initiative of convening this public debate on the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security.

I welcome the presence of the Secretary-General and thank him for his valuable contribution to the consideration of this important issue, as well as for all his initiatives to strengthen the Organization's capacities.

Over the past two years, our experience as a non-permanent member of the Council has made us witness to countless situations resulting in death, injury and other atrocities as the consequences of civil wars and acts of terrorism through the devastating effects of small arms and light weapons, of which Africa is most certainly the principal victim.

The Council's actions with respect to such scourges, while considerable in many ways, have needed to be significantly and sustainably perfected. In that regard, the visionary thinking of the founding fathers of our Organization is evident in their inclusion of Chapter VIII in the Charter, defining the mechanisms and identifying the necessary means for interaction between the Security Council and regional and subregional actors. That most certainly demonstrates the relevance of their vision, which is even more vibrant today.

There is no denying that the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security today represents genuine progress and that the opportunities for cooperation and interaction between the Council and those organizations have become more diverse in response to the need for a multidisciplinary approach to addressing crisis situations, as described in the Millennium Declaration. Regional arrangements in matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security have now become an integral part of collective security, as proclaimed in the presidential statement of 28 March 2007, contained in document S/PRST/2007/7.

However, those regional and subregional organizations require the necessary capacity and wherewithal to act. I refer here to the human, logistical, financial and technical support that they often lack. Indeed, the essential question today, particularly in Africa, is whether or not the regional and/or subregional organizations, acting on behalf of the major organ of international peacekeeping, enjoy sufficient support from the international community. If so, how did it happen that the soldiers of the African Union were on the front lines in Darfur without the appropriate means to act in such a mission? Unfortunately, the indispensable support that Africa needed in that case — and that it still needs — has still not been received and has not been perceived by everyone as imperative. The situation regarding the mission in Somalia is proof of that.

Additionally, for my delegation, the tragedy in Haskanita, where African soldiers serving the cause of peace were attacked in a cowardly fashion, killed and humiliated, did not evoke a timely and appropriate reaction from the Security Council. That shows a certain lack of rationality in some of the reactions of the Council. From our viewpoint, those are bad practices, which must be eliminated.

How can the international community fail to note that Africa is, in spite of the difficulties of the current times, in the process of building up its regional capacities, thus contributing further to improving the situation on the continent? The African Union is taking Africa's destiny in hand despite a lack of resources. This is, we emphasize, an invaluable contribution to the entire international community in terms of the maintenance of international peace and security. In that respect, the fact that standing brigades are being gradually installed in five regions and will be operational by 2010 should be welcomed for the support it will bring, over the next few years, to the international community.

The case of Africa, which my delegation has chosen in order to illustrate its comments, because it is the largest test bed for cooperation between the Council and regional and subregional organizations, shows that the levels of intervention are both varied and complementary in military and diplomatic terms. In Liberia and Sierra Leone, as we all know, the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have been decisive in putting an end to situations of prolonged conflict.

Central Africa, my own region, has not been left out of the initiatives concerning conflict situations in various member countries. In that context, a number of countries in Central Africa have formed a military contingent to stabilize the situation in the Central African Republic, with the logistical support of France, whom we would like to thank. We appreciate the constructive role played by the African Union, the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference in getting the Government of the Sudan to consent to the necessary transition from the African Union mission in Darfur to a United Nations operation.

We also note the complementary and very professional efforts on the part of Mr. Jan Eliasson and Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, respectively, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General and the Special Envoy of the Chairman of the African Union Commission, during the difficult negotiations between the rebel groups in Darfur and the Government of the Sudan to reach a political solution to the crisis.

We also know that African organizations are not the only ones to intervene in that area. The European Union, through its efforts in the Democratic Republic of Congo and on the border between Chad, the Central African Republic and the Sudan, has also shown that they are very interested in Africa. That has allowed us to understand how effective such expanded partnerships are in that context, as well as in other areas, such as Afghanistan, with the European Union police missions. We consider those efforts to be best practices that should be made known to others.

Congo has always pled for strengthened partnerships between the United Nations and the

African Union, so that the decisions of the Security Council, for example, might take into account the concerns of African countries and be therefore legitimate and applicable. We welcome in that context the establishment of the hybrid operation in Darfur.

Congo has also always believed in the need for an ongoing dialogue between the Security Council, on the one hand, and the African Union, on the other hand, through its Peace and Security Council. That dialogue should involve the States in conflict and other States in the subregion, because some conflicts, owing to their complexity and ramifications, go beyond national and subregional boundaries. That is the case in the conflicts in Darfur, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. We welcome the fact that that dialogue allowed us to sign, on 16 November 2006, a memorandum of understanding between the Security Council and the African Union, which further formalizes the mechanisms for cooperation between the two bodies.

Among existing mechanisms in Africa to be included in the museum of good practices, I would like to emphasize a subregional organization established in 1999 by the Economic Community of Central African States, under the auspices of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, namely, the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa. Its activities, which have been continuously reviewed, have made a significant contribution to improving inter-State relations and the climate of peace and security in the African subregion. The 26th ministerial meeting of the Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, held in Yaoundé on 7 September 2007, led to a series of recommendations, including the pursuit of regional cooperation for the maintenance of peace and the holding of a ministerial conference on questions of cross-border security. That recommendation led to the adoption of a statement of political commitment by States in the subregion on establishing organizational, administrative, legal and technical mechanisms for cooperation in border zones in order to deal with phenomena such as uncontrolled or forced movements of populations, criminal activities by armed groups, the illegal circulation of small arms and light weapons and the exploitation of natural resources. We would note here the very important role played by the Advisory Committee in Central Africa and how useful its multifaceted support is to our States. That momentum should, therefore, be maintained.

Conflict prevention and resolution, the search for peace and peacebuilding have rightly become nearly permanent quests, especially in Africa. Indeed, the task of restoring peace and rebuilding capacities for development has always been at the centre of our concerns.

In that regard, the efforts of the Peacebuilding Commission in Burundi and Sierra Leone, with the tremendous level of interest and commitment to it expressed by the international community, deserves to be welcomed. As we know, even the most developed peace agreements do not eliminate the causes of conflict. We need not only to implement them, but also to assist in the resumption of dialogue, confidence-building, respect for the law and economic recovery, which are the sine qua non conditions for maintaining the often fragile balance in developing countries. Here too, the contribution of the regional and subregional organizations is very important.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to note that regional organizations should, in conformity with Article 54 of the Charter of the United Nations, submit periodic reports to the Security Council on the relevant activities they have carried out. That would be the best way to share experiences on best practices and to commit the Council to periodic assessments in order to better develop its plans of action in the short, medium and long term.

Finally, my delegation fully supports the draft Presidential Statement prepared by the delegation of Indonesia.

Mr. Voto-Bernales (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by welcoming you, Sir, to this Chamber today and to congratulate you on the initiative of placing this very important subject on the agenda of the Council.

Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations establishes parameters for the distribution of work, responsibilities and duties shared by this universal Organization and regional arrangements and entities. It requires that their work be consistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter. That legal framework has assumed particular importance since the carrying out of joint activities between international, regional and subregional organizations was incorporated into the mandate of the Security Council. Resolution 1631 (2005) reflected that development and provided us with a useful inventory for extending and strengthening the

areas of cooperation that are evident in our discussions and decisions on the issues on the agenda of the Council.

In addition to their advantageous position with respect to the prevention and resolution of conflicts, regional and subregional organizations have also been participating in peacekeeping operations. Furthermore, they are currently being called upon to take part in institutional and material reconstruction efforts. They are able to do this, because they know well the structural problems that lie at the heart of conflicts, and they have an overall view of the internal and regional problems that bring together aspects of security, development and human rights.

In many cases, these capacities can be strengthened, thanks to horizontal and vertical cooperation. But this cooperation must be adapted on a case-by-case basis to each specific organization, and in particular must be adapted to each region, within the framework of the United Nations Charter. This is why we need to deepen further the contacts between the United Nations and these regional organizations at the institutional level, as well as on the ground.

We have to recognize that this interaction is not without problem areas; sometimes this arises from the constitutive agreements of the regional organizations or their degree of institutional strength; but in other cases this arises because of a lack of political will on the part of the actors or because of their relative lack of weight in the relevant organization. That explains why this specific experience of collaboration in the field is rather mixed; there are some positive cases and some not quite so positive.

I would now like to refer to three areas in which the Council has been active — namely, peacekeeping operations, institutional strengthening and peacebuilding. The primary responsibility to act rapidly and effectively in the areas of peace and security is the duty of the Security Council. On that basis, it is important to mobilize cooperation with regional organizations and to ensure that we are able to deploy rapidly with adequate logistics and troops. In these kinds of cases, and to be effective, we must take into account the disparate capacities, both military and financial, that the forces of the regional organizations may have available. And we should check that the operations that require United Nations funding be in line with the patterns and criteria established in the Charter for the maintenance of peace and security.

On the other hand, with regard to the mandates of many of these peacekeeping operations, support is included for the holding of elections, for the channelling of political dialogue and for the reconstruction of democratic institutions in post-conflict situations. It is these aspects that help to guarantee the stability of a country or a Government. International or subregional organizations are, therefore, called upon to complement the efforts of the international community, including by early warning systems, in order to dissipate tensions and to prevent or slow down the violation of human rights.

Together with the strengthening of the political institutions, there are also the economic and social needs that have to be dealt with in order to consolidate peace. The regional and subregional organizations must continue to make their contribution to bringing about an international environment that will strengthen stability, support development projects, facilitate trade and promote private investment. As part of this reconstruction effort, multinational companies should also be included, grouped together, for example, in the Global Compact.

In conclusion, we feel that there is a broad and promising area that can be developed further here, so that the regional and subregional mechanisms can cooperate and accompany multilateral action at the global level to strengthen the principles and purposes of the United Nations, paying attention to the specificities of each region and maintaining the framework of subsidiarity and complementarity established in the United Nations Charter.

Sir John Sawers (United Kingdom): Mr. President, it is an honour having you chair our meeting today. Thank you for doing so. And you have chosen a topical issue. Although the Charter recognized from the outset the role of regional organizations, they have never been as active and important as they are today. I would like to highlight just a few examples and challenges.

We have seen the contribution that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has made to focusing international attention on Burma, not least the support ASEAN is giving to the efforts of the Secretary-General, whose presence is also extremely welcome here today, and Professor Gambari. My

Government hopes the ASEAN Summit later this month will send a strong further message about the need for change in Burma.

In Africa, the expanding role of the African Union (AU) has been one of the most important developments of recent years. The Security Council mission to Addis Ababa this summer resulted in a joint declaration, committing this Council and the African Union's Peace and Security Council to intensify their cooperation across the conflict spectrum. As part of this, we should explore more sustained United Nations support for the African Union, including in capacity-building. We look forward to the forthcoming report from the Secretary-General.

In Darfur, this partnership faces a critical test, as the AU-United Nations hybrid force takes over from the purely AU force. The experience to come in Darfur is bound to provide lessons for both organizations. Our priority now must be the effective deployment of the hybrid force. My Government supports the AU-United Nations proposed composition of this force, and we look to the Government of the Sudan to accept it without reservations.

Darfur is also a diplomatic partnership between the African Union and the United Nations. Salim Salim and Jan Eliasson are working to build a sustainable peace, supported by a joint mediation team. They need all our support in what will be a difficult and lengthy process.

In the Middle East, the Arab League, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Gulf Cooperation Council play valuable roles in promoting cooperation and political progress.

Across Africa, we have seen regional and subregional organizations playing an important role in conflict resolution, for example the Economic Community of West African States in the Ivory Coast. My Government hopes that such efforts could also succeed in Zimbabwe. The South African Government and the Southern African Development Community have been engaged to seek to resolve the crisis there. We would support any process to improve the plight of the people in Zimbabwe, where human rights abuses, appalling standards of government, brutal intimidation and economic collapse have turned a once rich nation into one of the most desperate places on Earth.

Our principal organization in Europe, the European Union (EU), has developed new capabilities in foreign policy and defence over the last 10 years. I associate myself with the statement to be made later in this debate by Portugal on behalf of the EU. In Africa, but also in the Balkans, the Middle East and Asia, the EU is active in military and civilian stabilization efforts. The EU is directly engaged in building up the rule of law in Iraq, providing police support and training in Afghanistan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, developing Palestinian Security Forces and providing the peacekeeping force in Bosnia.

On Bosnia, we look forward to hearing from the High Representative on 15 November. We support the steps he has taken to ensure the continued viability of the Dayton Agreement. The European Union also stands ready to take on its responsibilities in Kosovo, working alongside NATO, once the status process is concluded next month.

NATO, of course, is our second regional organization, a transatlantic alliance designed to defend the West during the cold war, and now transformed so it can project stability and security beyond our region. NATO bears the brunt of the security effort in Afghanistan. It has stabilized the Balkans after the tumultuous 1990s. And it stands ready, as the most militarily capable multinational organization, to consider further demanding security tasks.

EU military operations in the Balkans have been conducted in partnership with NATO, and both the European Union and NATO work closely with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, another valuable organization in our conflict resolution toolbox. NATO, the EU and the United Nations are also working together in Afghanistan. In such cases, an array of international involvement can be needed. Different actors can bring different assets. But it is crucial that coordination of the international effort is effective, and the United Nations often has the central role to play there.

May I just say, on Afghanistan, that we are appalled by today's suicide bombing in New Baghlan, which seems to have killed up to 100 people, including five members of the Afghan Parliament. Actions such as this are inhuman. We utterly condemn those responsible and those who supplied the materials for this act of terrorism.

Around the world, the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations are partners for peace, as the statement we will adopt later today makes clear. The challenges are more complex than ever, but the opportunities for progress are also there. That should be our focus and our common goal.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): On behalf of the Chinese delegation, Sir, I wish to extend our warm welcome to you and to thank you for coming all the way to New York to preside over this important open debate. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his important statement. I also welcome the representatives of regional and subregional organizations.

The world is now undergoing complex and profound changes. Member States are confronted not only by traditional security issues such as territorial disputes and armed conflicts, but also by non-traditional security challenges such as terrorism, a prevalence of drugs, the spread of diseases and climate change. No country or international organization can do the job alone in addressing those cross-border and even transregional challenges. It is therefore imperative to promote multilateralism and to give full play to and strengthen the consultation and cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations.

In recent years, regional and subregional organizations have made increasingly remarkable contributions to preventing and resolving conflicts, promoting post-conflict reconstruction, combating terrorism and defusing humanitarian crises. China firmly supports the United Nations in intensifying cooperation with regional and subregional organizations so as to maintain international as well as regional peace and security.

In that connection, I wish to make the following four points. First, in order to give play to the role of regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security, the Charter of the United Nations should continue to serve as guidance. According to the United Nations Charter, the Security Council shoulders primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and is the core of the collective international security mechanism. Regional organizations can take mandatory actions only with the authorization of the Security Council. Chapter VIII of the Charter points out that the Security Council should encourage the development of the pacific settlement of local disputes by regional agencies. China believes that this should continue to serve as the basis for supporting the role of regional or subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security.

Secondly, it is necessary to strengthen communication and cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. All critical issues have complicated causes and are hard to resolve. Solutions often emerge during the interactions between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. The outcome document of the 2005 World Summit contains recognition of the contributions made by regional organizations to international peace and security and support for a closer link between the United Nations and regional organizations on the basis of the United Nations Charter.

In November 2006, the United Nations and the African Union (AU) signed a declaration on Enhancing UN-AU Cooperation, opening a new channel for cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. We hope such cooperation will be further strengthened, particularly in identified areas. Thirdly, the United Nations should continue to provide assistance to regional and subregional organizations, such as the African Union, to strengthen their capacity-building.

African issues dominate the Security Council's agenda. The African Union and subregional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the Southern African Development Community have made arduous efforts to address local conflicts and facilitate post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction. Owing to constraints on resources, however, they were not able to give full scope to their unique strengths in resolving their issues. Through its resolution 1769 (2007) adopted in July, the Security Council decided to launch the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, Sudan. The peacekeeping operation will be deployed jointly by the United Nations and the African Union, but the main resources will be provided by the United Nations. That initiated a new model through which the United Nations could strengthen the capacity-building of the African Union. That model deserves to be examined comprehensively and could be used to settle conflicts in other parts of the world.

Fourthly, regional and subregional organizations should be encouraged to play a bigger role. It has been proven that, thanks to geographical, cultural and other advantages, regional and subregional organizations can play a unique and even irreplaceable role in resolving local conflicts. With regard to issues on its agenda, the Security Council should, of course, work vigorously to address them but should also encourage constructive help with those issues from regional and subregional organizations. As to issues that do not pose a threat to international peace and security, it is all the more important to fully mobilize the initiative of regional and subregional organizations towards strengthening communication and coordination with those countries that are concerned with bringing about solutions at the regional level.

As one of the most important regional mechanisms in the Asia-Pacific region, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has made unremitting efforts to maintain regional peace and security. The ASEAN+3 cooperation between ASEAN and China, Japan and the Republic of Korea is playing an increasingly important role in promoting regional peace and security. China firmly supports ASEAN in playing a leading role in the settlement of critical issues in the region and is ready to do its utmost to support and coordinate with ASEAN in that regard.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization has emerged as an important platform for promoting regional security, stability and development. China supports its active role in combating terrorism and maintaining regional stability. The building of a harmonious world of lasting peace and common prosperity requires the concerted efforts of the international community. My delegation is convinced that regional and subregional organizations, as an important component of the international community, will play an even bigger role in maintaining international peace and security in the future.

In conclusion, China wishes to thank the Indonesian delegation for drawing up the Presidential Statement. China supports the adoption of the statement by the Security Council.

Mr. Bartho (Slovakia): On behalf of the Slovak delegation I would also like to congratulate the Indonesian presidency of the Council for the articulated concept paper and also for the well prepared Presidential Statement, which harmoniously elaborates on this important topic, which was so notably developed by the unanimous adoption of Council resolution 1631 (2005) during Romania's Council presidency in October 2005, was further explored by the Greek presidency in September 2006 and was elaborated later in the context of conflict resolution in Africa and Europe, where regional organizations play an important role.

Slovakia aligns itself with the statement that will be delivered later on by Portugal on behalf of the European Union.

It goes without saying that no two regional or intergovernmental organizations are the same. It is, therefore, necessary to identify areas where possible cooperation with the appropriate organizations could be effectively enhanced and implemented. Calls for the establishment of mechanisms that would allow regional and intergovernmental organizations to present their key findings from their peacebuilding or post-conflict missions, thus involving them proactively in dealing with collective responses to the peace and security challenges of today, are not new. The creation of such mechanisms would provide a flexible, effective and regular flow of up-to-date information between the United Nations and the regional organizations, which would certainly contribute to more complimentary and coordinated actions on both sides and exclude duplicated actions and efforts. Such cooperation, consistent with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, should be intensified both at the high level and at the expert level. The goal should be to establish efficient partnerships and an equitable division of labour that reflects the comparative advantage of each organization involved in conflict prevention and peacekeeping. Slovakia welcomes the personal involvement of the Secretary-General in this respect, and we look forward to his report with recommendations pursuant to the presidential statement of 28 March 2007 (S/PRST/2007/7).

Like others, Slovakia acknowledges the primary responsibility of the Council in the maintenance of international peace and security. At the same time, there are many advantages to choosing regional and subregional organizations in the prevention or resolution of conflict, such as local ownership, leverage over parties or deeper understanding of the region concerned, which has been proven in particular in Africa. Therefore, Slovakia fully supports additional close and operational cooperation between the United

Nations and regional and subregional organizations in the field of conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Here, we would like to commend the African Union and subregional organizations such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the Central African Economic and Monetary Community and the Southern African Development Community for their role in numerous peace initiatives and in the peaceful settlement of disputes in Africa.

As a member of the European Union (EU), we would also like to praise the positive developments with regard to the triangular cooperation between the United Nations, the African Union and the European Union. We look forward in particular to the EU's contribution to addressing the regional dimension of the Darfur crisis by deploying a bridging military operation in eastern Chad and the north-eastern Central African Republic in the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy.

We welcome the unanimous adoption of resolution 1769 (2007), which moves the partnership and cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union to a new, unprecedented level. Deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur will undoubtedly strengthen the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union for years to come. We would like to stress that the success of this particular cooperative effort will be crucial in bringing hope to the people of Darfur and contributing to a lasting solution to the Darfur conflict. Slovakia underlines the need to further intensify the efforts of all stakeholders in order to ensure deployment of an effective hybrid operation on the ground as soon as possible.

As we have said on previous occasions, we fully share the call for a pragmatic and action-oriented approach towards cooperation, regardless of the agenda item concerned. Based on our direct experience from chairing the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), I would like to say few words about its work in the context of this thematic debate. Council members will recall that in February 2007 we discussed ways to enhance the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) by affirming the Council's determination to promote increased multilateral cooperation, particularly with international intergovernmental organizations. In this context, the 1540 Committee has undertaken a range of outreach activities with regional and international intergovernmental organizations, such as the Organization of American States, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the World Customs Organization. All of those organizations play crucial roles in the implementation process, especially through their guidelines, practical experience and lessons learned in the areas covered by resolution 1540 (2004) and through their assistance programmes to facilitate the implementation of that resolution.

The activities undertaken to date demonstrate the growing cooperation and interaction between the 1540 Committee and those organizations in pursuing the common goal of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It is also acknowledged that the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) by all States is a long-term process that will require continuous efforts at the national, regional and international levels, including enhancing capacity-building and assistance by States and other members of the international community. To that end, the Committee places special emphasis on promoting opportunities for international cooperation and assistance with all regional and subregional organizations that have experience and resources in any area covered by the resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006).

Mr. Verbeke (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): First and foremost, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having taken the initiative to organize this debate and for having travelled from Jakarta to New York to preside.

Better defining the respective roles of regional and subregional organizations and of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security is a major challenge.

As a member of the European Union, I make reference to the statement to be delivered later by the representative of Portugal on behalf of the presidency of the Union.

In resolution 1631 (2005), the Security Council stressed the importance of closer cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations at all stages in the management of a crisis. Pursuant to that resolution, the Secretary-General has presented recommendations (S/2006/590) that are particularly relevant; a number of those should

be considered with a view to their implementation in specific regional contexts.

Basic conditions for effective cooperation are knowledge of respective capacities and the creation of rapid communication channels. Meetings like today's are useful, first and foremost, in enabling regional and subregional organizations to explain their activities and their expectations.

But knowledge of respective capacities can best be acquired through regular relations between secretariats. For this reason, my country favours strengthening such relations where they have not yet been sufficiently developed. The same can be said for meetings and exchanges between high-level officials. Through such relations between secretariats and high-level meetings, we can have a fruitful exchange of experiences, on both a technical and a geopolitical level. Meetings of political bodies supplement this groundwork, as can be seen by the visit of the Security Council to the headquarters of the African Union, and its 16 June meeting in Addis Ababa with the African Union Peace and Security Council.

The role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security embraces the whole gamut of areas of action, from conflict prevention to peacebuilding. The ongoing exercise within the United Nations Department of Political Affairs aimed at strengthening prevention and mediation capacities must be accompanied by a discussion on how to make greater use of the prevention and mediation capacities of regional and subregional organizations and how to avoid duplication of efforts.

As far as peacekeeping operations are concerned, great progress has been made in cooperation between the United Nations and the European Union, between the United Nations and the African Union and among the three organizations. Strengthening the capacities of regional and subregional organizations is essential and efforts to that end must, if necessary, be assisted by the United Nations or other organizations. Moreover, since every peacekeeping operation has its own particular characteristics, the main challenge is to adapt cooperation to the capacities involved, taking scrupulous care to achieve the highest standards and a clear chain of command. In that connection, we believe that the structure of the hybrid force decided upon in the context of the Darfur crisis should not necessarily lead to a generally applicable model.

The role of regional and subregional organizations in peacebuilding is undeniable. The Peacebuilding Commission offers an ideal framework for consultation among all relevant actors, and it is important to ensure the greatest possible involvement by regional organizations in such work.

Belgium is aware of the dangers inherent in all processes aimed at the institutionalization of relationships. That is why we believe it is more important to create pragmatic and flexible synergies than to establish theoretical frameworks, which very often prove to be rigid and not very functional.

Nevertheless, it remains true that many actors and instruments are involved in the very broad area of maintaining international peace and security. Therefore, it is essential to structure cooperation according to need. The practice of joint statements, used by the European Union and the United Nations in 2003 and, most recently, in June 2007, is an instrument enabling us to be flexible in defining subjects for discussion, to specify certain modalities and to determine certain cooperation mechanisms. However, such exercises should not cause us to make cooperation conform to rigid and prescriptive criteria.

Belgium believes that a practical approach, favouring practice over theory and taking particular account of lessons learned from ongoing operations, can serve as a framework for continuing to strengthen and refine the relationship between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations.

Mr. Shcherbak (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Our delegation is pleased to welcome you, Mr. Foreign Minister, to the presidency of the Security Council. Your presence in this Chamber, along with the participation of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and representatives of a broad spectrum of leading regional organizations in this meeting, are convincing proof of the importance of today's topic.

We agree with the Secretary-General and previous speakers that, while cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations has increased to a truly unprecedented level, additional efforts could be made to further intensify it. In our view, the threats and challenges now facing us can be overcome only through a

comprehensive and collective approach and in strict compliance with the Charter of the United Nations.

An important element in further efforts to increase the effectiveness of our world Organization, as the central multilateral institution responsible for maintaining international peace and security, is the continued growth of practical cooperation and coordination between the United Nations, including the Security Council, and regional and other intergovernmental organizations. Such interaction, as clearly stipulated in the 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1), must continue to be based on the solid foundation of the Charter, in particular its Chapter VIII, and on the need for careful observance of the basic principles and criteria of international peacekeeping at all stages of conflict prevention and settlement and post-conflict peacebuilding.

That involves, first and foremost, the indisputably important responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security. Ideally, all regional or coalition peacekeeping operations should be authorized by and held accountable to the Council. That condition should become binding in cases in which the mandates of such operations include elements of enforcement measures.

There have been many positive experiences in the area of cooperation between the Council and its regional partners, which we have already discussed. Here, I am thinking in particular of the European Union, NATO, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Organization of American States, the Caribbean Community and a number of other subregional organizations, including the League of Arab States, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). Obviously, the experience acquired in this area demonstrates the need to accord priority to political and diplomatic means of conflict prevention and settlement, with a key role to be played by Africans themselves. The peacekeeping efforts of the AU, ECOWAS, SADC and IGAD, as well as the mediation missions conducted by prominent African political leaders, in a broad range of situations, have made it possible to make important progress in strengthening regional stability.

The Russian Federation has consistently stated that the efforts of African organizations should be fully supported by the authority of the Security Council and by the logistical and technical capacities of the United Nations. Particularly timely, in that context, are the efforts made in Darfur by the African Union Mission in the Sudan and the preparations for deploying the hybrid peacekeeping force established pursuant to resolution 1769 (2007) in Darfur by the end of the year. Of course, it is important to have feedback. Here, I am referring in particular to the need to ensure that regional operations are effectively planned and executed and that they are held sufficiently accountable to the Security Council. That is particularly relevant in those cases in which the Council not only supports such operations, but also authorizes them through its decisions.

This year's follow-up visit to Africa by members of the Security Council and our comprehensive meetings with AU leaders have enabled us to discuss virtually the entire range of acute crisis situations on the continent, as well as issues related to the future development of the Council's practical cooperation with the African Union Peace and Security Council to resolve the most critical problems threatening peace and security in Africa. The Council's visit has established a mechanism for regular exchanges of views between the two organs regarding issues of mutual concern to them.

Peacekeepers from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) are also making a substantial contribution to conflict settlement in the post-Soviet space. In particular, together with the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia, they are continuing to support security and stability in the area affected by the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict. The Russian Federation intends to continue to vigorously promote long-term cooperation between the United Nations and the CIS, particularly in the area of peacekeeping.

In that context, the cooperation developing between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) — which has been working intensively to establish its own peacekeeping potential, including for use in United Nations peacekeeping operations — has great potential. The CSTO is also making a significant contribution to international efforts aimed at the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Under CSTO auspices, effective mechanisms have been at work for several years to

combat the northern route of the drug trade from Afghanistan to Europe, and Operation Canal has been set up to establish a permanent counter-narcotics belt along Afghanistan's borders.

In ensuring stability and security in the Eurasian region, an important role is being played by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, whose members have expressed a desire to cooperate with the United Nations in a host of relevant areas, including, in particular, combating international terrorism and the illegal-drug trade and assisting in post-conflict reconstruction in Afghanistan. In that regard, we continue to endorse the recommendation, set out in the 2005 World Summit Outcome, that regional organizations with conflict prevention or peacekeeping capacities should consider making those capacities part of the United Nations Standby Arrangements System.

We are convinced that the coming together of regional partners and the United Nations will continue. On the one hand, we expect that regional and subregional organizations will more actively make their resources and comparative advantages available. On the other hand, the United Nations, including the Security Council, should consolidate coordination and interaction with these organizations, keeping in mind the principles of reasonable division of labour and respect for the prerogatives of the United Nations and its Security Council.

The collective efforts for rapid social and economic rehabilitation of countries emerging from crises is an integral part of the international strategy to secure peace and the non-renewal of conflict by establishing safeguards against renewal of conflicts. Here, a coordinating role should be played by the Peacebuilding Commission, whose agenda already includes Burundi and Sierra Leone.

We welcome the practice of holding regular high-level meetings between the Secretary-General and the leaders of the regional organizations on an increasingly broad and varied joint agenda. In addition to peacekeeping and peacebuilding tasks, we have added countering the spread of weapons of mass destruction, the illegal flows of small arms and light weapons, settling other destabilizing transborder problems, combating drug trafficking and organized crime. In this context, it would be useful to have an official structuring of agreements between the respective secretariats of the United Nations and its regional partners.

In conclusion, we would like to express our appreciation to you, Mr. President, and to the entire Indonesian delegation for preparing a good draft statement, which will be adopted today with our support.

Mr. Christian (Ghana): I would like to join preceding speakers in commending the Indonesian delegation for organizing this debate. I would also like to thank you, Sir, for your kind words at the beginning of the meeting regarding the Ghana delegation and me, in reference to the Ghanaian presidency of this Council.

The recurrence of today's theme in the Council's open debates is an acknowledgement of the increasing relevance of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. My delegation is optimistic that at the end of our deliberations, we will resolve to strengthen the cooperation between the various regional organizations and the United Nations, in particular the Security Council.

The growing importance of regional and subregional organizations in conflict prevention and resolution is not merely the result of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. It is also the natural consequence of the failure sometimes of the international community to respond promptly and effectively to some conflict situations.

The relevance of regional or subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security cannot be overemphasized. Regional organizations often have in-depth knowledge about the root causes of conflicts in their respective regions. Those organizations may have better knowledge and understanding of the dynamics, as well as of the parties and personalities involved in a given conflict, and can therefore be indispensable sources of useful information, which will enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations in the management of those conflicts.

Some regional bodies are more flexible in the allocation of resources, including troops, and are therefore able to deploy them, faster than the United Nations can. Furthermore, regional and subregional organizations can be very useful in launching

peacebuilding activities in support of the United Nations and can facilitate post-conflict reconstruction. In addition, as the world continues to be confronted with both new and old threats to international peace and security, the demand for peacekeeping will continue to increase. With the United Nations having no standing army of its own, the regional and subregional organizations can be indispensable resource pools for tapping troops for peacekeeping operations.

Moreover, as the concept of international security has itself been broadened with the declaration of a global war against terrorism, local knowledge and expertise will be crucial in any antiterrorism operations. Addressing these and other emerging issues requires effective cooperation with the relevant regional or subregional bodies.

The broad strength of regional organizations vis-à-vis the United Nations has generally centred on the motivations of local actors to become involved in addressing conflicts and to maintain involvement even in the face of casualties. Some members of the Security Council are sometimes more inclined to seek regional solutions for operations where a conflict falls within a traditional sphere of influence or where major powers are reluctant to deploy their own forces. This may also be driven by concerns about the perceived difficulty and cost of mustering support within the wider international community and the legislative processes of the United Nations.

Reflecting these tendencies, regional peacekeeping capacity is undergoing considerable development, propelled by the interest of countries within and outside those regions. However, these developments should not be regarded as favouring the arguments for multilateral or regional peacekeeping operations as substitutes for or replacements of United Nations operations. They must be construed in the broader sense as part of the overall efforts to enhance cooperation between the United Nations and the regional and subregional organizations in order to share responsibilities, based on the comparative advantage of each, leading to complementarity and the avoidance of competition.

The Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and it is in this context that effective cooperation must take place. Cooperation between the United Nations and the regional and subregional organizations is a shared responsibility. Members of the regional and subregional organizations should ensure respect for the fundamental principles enshrined in the Charter or instruments establishing these organizations, especially in the areas of peace and security. In the case of Africa, for instance, the Constitutive Act of the African Union frowns upon the unconstitutional overthrow of Governments and enjoins its member States to ensure respect for rule of law and the democratic principles of governance.

While the regional and subregional organizations endeavour to address their peace and security challenges, the United Nations and the international community must support their efforts, keeping in mind that the Security Council still bears the primary responsibility for the maintenance of the international peace and security. Indeed, more action is needed from the international community to tackle the wider global sources of armed conflict. The United Nations should support capacity-building and the training of personnel and should maintain a sustained engagement with these organizations.

To ensure the success and effectiveness of regional organizations, co-deployment sanctioned by the United Nations in an operation carried out by regional or subregional organizations should establish a clear framework that will include specifying objectives, careful delineation of the respective roles and responsibilities of the United Nations and those organizations. In the end, however, the involvement of regional organizations must not be seen as diluting the primary responsibility of the Security Council.

Finally, Ghana supports the adoption of the presidential statement prepared by the Indonesian delegation.

Mr. Arias (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me first to congratulate you and your delegation, Mr. President, for the initiative to hold this debate. I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his presence here and also the representatives of the various regional and subregional organizations that are with us here today.

Allow me also to reiterate what has been the unwavering position of my country, namely, that in this kind of debate, it is preferable and useful to hear the opinion of those people, countries and, in this case, regions that are affected by the debate, so that we, the

members of the Security Council, can benefit from and enrich our presentations with their viewpoints.

Achieving peace is a complicated topic that involves many factors. One of these factors is giving form and content to the architecture of collective security, as set out in Chapter VIII of the Charter, and thereby to strengthen the regional and subregional synergies that the Charter offers. In this context, allow me to stress the initiative undertaken by the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) to hold its fifth special meeting in Nairobi last month, with the participation of a broad range of international, regional and subregional organizations. The joint statement endorsed at that meeting established a practical results-based framework which allows us to promote cooperation between the United Nations and this body.

Regional organizations are a natural mechanism for promoting, with local leadership, the aspirations of the international community. They are the ones that possess the most complete and direct knowledge of the roots of conflict in their geographic area. In this respect, we recognize the work of the Organization of the American States (OAS). The good offices of the OAS in peacekeeping in the region as well as its initiatives to alleviate social problems are a demonstration, I believe, of a dynamic expertise. In the case of Haiti, OAS participation as a regional counterpart has very much helped the United Nations in its work on the ground.

Day by day, the Security Council adapts a broader vision of its responsibilities with regard to the risks to peace and security. However, it still does not give the regional organizations sufficient logistical and financial support to enable them to be an effective first line of defence in conflict. The garnering of funds and the logistical planning for the joint mission with the United Nations is a very difficult task, and to demonstrate this point, we have the well-known example of the deployment of the hybrid force in Darfur. On the other hand, when the will is weak and the priorities of the international community are divided, coordination and funding are the first casualties. This is an unfortunate situation. We see this happening today in Somalia.

It is clear that we cannot overcome these problems unless we have formal mechanisms for financing coordinated actions and unless we have ongoing arrangements that can be adapted among secretariats to coordinate logistics and training. This point was mentioned by the representative of the Russian Federation. Two years after the Secretary-General's recommendations at the World Summit, our relations with regional organizations continue to be organized on an improvised basis where we deal with issues on a case-by-case basis, handling the challenges as they present themselves, without creating the formal structures that would help to strengthen action.

When inaction is not an option, we cannot simply improvise and assign responsibilities to an organization or ask it to bear costs. For this reason, it is important that the presidential statement we adopt stresses the importance of determining and developing modalities which will favour the contribution of regional and subregional organizations to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Mr. Lacroix (France) (*spoke in French*): My delegation too would like, first of all, to express our gratitude to the Indonesian delegation, to your country and to you, Sir, in particular, for having taken the initiative to organize this debate on a subject which is fundamentally important to the United Nations and the Security Council. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for having participated in our debate today.

The founders of the United Nations recognized, from the inception of the Charter, that there is a specific role for regional organizations in contributing to the peaceful settlement of disputes and to international cooperation. We simply need to look at the significant participation in today's debate to see how much these organizations have developed since 1945. There is no longer any corner of the world where the strengthening of regional solidarity has not become a principle objective and, often, a concrete reality.

This evolution is, for us, a challenge. It represents a great asset. Regional organizations bring to the table critical capabilities to help us deal with crises involving political and jurisdictional mechanisms, military police and help for reconstruction. There are two examples that come immediately to mind.

First of all is the European Union (EU) — and I would clarify here that France fully concurs with the statement to be made by Portugal on behalf of the EU. The EU has made an excellent contribution to international peace and security by stabilizing the European continent and by assisting in its prosperity.

Once it began to project its identity and peaceful ideals throughout the world, it cooperated closely with the United Nations. It supported the United Nations in Bosnia where it took up the police mission; in Kosovo, where it is getting ready to take over the police and judicial operations of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo; in the Democratic Republic of the Congo where the EU brought in decisive military support to Ituri in 2003 to the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where it also significantly contributed to the organization of the elections and where it continues to strengthen international action for the reform of the security sector; and finally, in Sudan, particularly in Darfur, where the EU supports the African Union Mission in Sudan and will support the hybrid force. I would also like to mention the EU involvement in the Central African Republic and in Chad with the deployment of a European force, mandated by the United Nations, which will protect civilians and support a United Nations police mission there.

There is also the example of the African Union (AU). France directly, and through the EU, supports the strengthening of the capacities of this organization and its members so that they may participate more actively in stabilizing the African continent. I will not go on in length on items others have mentioned, but I would like to note how much the strengthening of the AU and its stronger cooperation with the United Nations has been very promising. I am particularly thinking here of the decision to establish the United Nations-African Union hybrid force in Darfur.

The Security Council, within its responsibilities, notes this rise in importance of the AU and notes, particularly, the participation of President Konaré in the 25 September Council summit on peace and security in Africa, a meeting that was chaired by the President of the French Republic.

I would also like to note and welcome the growing role played by the Association of South-East Asian Nations in the peaceful settlement of regional crises and, in particular, its commitment to a true, inclusive dialogue and national reconciliation in Burma.

The growth in the role of regional organizations also offers opportunities which we need to seize. I am thinking specifically of three areas where increased cooperation could be especially beneficial. First of all, in combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006) envisions an obligation to combat the risk of access to WMDs or related materials by non-State actors. Regional organizations can provide key support in this area to the committee established under Council resolution 1540 (2004). This is cooperation which needs to be greatly developed and one which we actively support.

Secondly, in combating terrorism, a solid and focused cooperation on results with international, regional and subregional organizations is vital to the implementation by States of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). The same can be said for the sanctions against Al-Qaida and the Taliban. Cooperation with Interpol, in particular, is recognized in Security Council resolution 1699 (2006). Others have developed since then, especially regionally. A few days ago, the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) met in Nairobi for its fifth special meeting with international, regional and subregional organizations. We welcome the results of this meeting.

However, it is necessary to increase and broaden such partnerships. Today's events, and in particular the attack in the province of Baghlan in Afghanistan, which France resolutely condemns, once again illustrate, were there even a need to do so, the need to strengthen our collective efforts against terrorism by working with regional organizations.

In conclusion, I should like to refer to an area — the illicit trafficking in light weapons — where we think there is a need to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. Light weapons destabilize entire regions and are sometimes even used against United Nations forces. No effort should be spared to enable regional organizations to contribute to combating that trafficking.

Nevertheless, as Members of the United Nations, we should continue to be vigilant as we help regional organizations come of age. We represent a universal Organization. Despite all the regional specificities and local values, the Organization is founded on the rejection of relativism and on the promotion of the universal ideal of peace and cooperation. There is no area of the world where the United Nations is not involved — nor should there be. There are no customs that make a region incomprehensible or inaccessible to the United Nations. The United Nations is, and must

continue to be, at the heart of the system of collective security. Regional organizations can support the United Nations, but they are no substitute for it.

This is first and foremost an issue of legitimacy, but it is also a matter of efficiency. There is therefore a need for special vigilance with regard to the use of our resources. Cooperation with regional organizations should not mean relegating the United Nations merely to providing ways and means to third parties without it being at the centre of control and the taking of decisions.

I should like to conclude by referring to the role of the Peacebuilding Commission. The Commission could serve as a point of convergence for all stakeholders emerging from regional conflicts. The participation of regional and subregional organizations is crucial. France very much looks forward to interacting with them.

Finally, I should like to express the support of the delegation of France for the draft presidential statement that has been prepared by Indonesia, which we will adopt shortly.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia.

I should like to preface my remarks by expressing deep appreciation to the Secretary-General for his active participation in this debate and for the important insights he has shared.

Regional and subregional organizations have become an integral part of the global architecture. They are increasingly recognized for their role in the promotion of security and prosperity in their respective regions. Indonesia is a consistent and robust supporter of regional organizations. It is a founding member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). It has vigorously promoted interregional cooperation involving South-East Asia and the South-West Pacific, and between Asia and Africa. It has also strongly supported cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. In that spirit, we have initiated this meeting of the Council.

The capability of regional and subregional organizations to promote international peace and security is yet to be fully realized. The wealth of their experience in this vital activity is yet to be tapped. In accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, modalities can be developed to enhance their contribution to international peace and security.

Indonesia's experience as a founding member of ASEAN attests to the importance of a regional organization to peace and security. On the basis of that experience, we offer the following observations.

First, a regional organization can fundamentally shift the dynamics of the region towards peace and security. It can build bridges of understanding, it can transform relations from enmity to amity and it can bring stability and prosperity where conflict and discord previously reigned.

When ASEAN was established, in 1967, a war was raging in South-East Asia, which was then an economic backwater. Trust and confidence among the five founding members were at a low point. With patience and perseverance and by taking a step-by-step building-block approach, ASEAN has grown to include 10 South-East Asian countries. For 40 years, ASEAN member countries have enjoyed peace and security. It has therefore enabled the region to focus on economic development, which in turn reinforces peace and security.

ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia serves as a code of conduct for relations among its members, and between ASEAN and acceding external States. Signatories and acceding States renounce the use of force and bind themselves to peacefully settling their disputes in the region. Indeed, ASEAN has been able to reinforce the norms of the Charter of the United Nations and conflict prevention efforts.

Our second observation is that a regional or subregional organization must adapt to new challenges, in order to remain relevant to the pursuit of international peace and security. In the face of the challenges of the downside of globalization and the new threats to human security, ASEAN is transforming itself from a rather loose association of States into an ASEAN community resting on three pillars: an ASEAN security community, an ASEAN economic community and an ASEAN socio-cultural community.

The attainment of the ASEAN security community will enhance ASEAN's capacity for conflict prevention and resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding. It will entail political development

based on the principles of democracy, human rights and good governance. ASEAN will thereby emerge as a community that goes beyond addressing economic and social issues and traditional security concerns. It will be deeply committed to human rights and democracy. The ASEAN charter is expected to be signed two weeks from now. Its adoption will make ASEAN a rules-based organization.

Thirdly, a regional organization can influence the dynamics for peace and prosperity well beyond its geographic borders. Since its inception, in 1967, while promoting internal integration, ASEAN has pursued an outward-looking strategy. It has been an open organization that continues to enhance cooperation beyond its geographical boundaries and with other regional organizations. It has therefore cultivated dialogue-partner relations with 10 countries and organizations.

It maintains its ASEAN+3 cooperation with China, Japan and South Korea — a process that links South-East Asia with North-East Asia.

It is the driving spirit behind the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), which it established in 1994, and the only forum of dialogue and consultation on political and security issues, confidence-building and preventive diplomacy in the larger Asia-Pacific region.

In 2005, ASEAN launched the East Asia Summit, bringing the countries of the ASEAN+3 process together with Australia, India and New Zealand. The Summit envisions the establishment of a new architecture for peace, security and prosperity in East Asia.

ASEAN has developed dialogues with Europe, through the Asia-Europe Meeting, and with Latin America, through the Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation. ASEAN is thereby sharing with countries beyond its own region its norms and practices in the promotion of peace and security. Although ASEAN's membership does not formally include countries in East Asia and the Asia-Pacific region, the activities of ASEAN cover those larger regions through its dialogue-partner mechanism.

Indonesia has been a great proponent of such ASEAN-driven efforts. Indeed, Indonesia has also promoted, and directly benefited from, intraregional cooperation.

In that connection, Indonesia wishes to pay tribute to the European Union and ASEAN for their contribution to our successful effort to restore peace and security in the province of Aceh during the years 2005 to 2007, in particular by providing a joint monitoring team to supervise the implementation of the Aceh peace agreement.

Indonesia is deeply committed to and involved in those intraregional and interregional activities. At the same time, we are also deeply committed to the principles, ideals and goals of the United Nations. Hence, we are totally convinced of the strategic need for enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. Through such cooperation, we can effectively address the global security challenges of our time. It is Indonesia's fervent hope that our discussions today will help attain that goal.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to my colleague His Excellency Mr. Alberto Romulo, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines, and give him the floor.

Mr. Romulo (Philippines): The Philippines congratulates Indonesia and its Foreign Minister on its assumption of the presidency of the Council.

The changing face of our world highlights the indispensable role of regional and subregional organizations in our quest for peace and security. For the Philippines, the peace and security of the different regions of the world hold great importance in terms of our commitment to the basic principles of the Charter and because of our deep concern for our nationals. One tenth of our nationals are outside the country and live in practically every region of the world. It is thus in the Philippines' national interest that all regions remain peaceful, stable and progressive.

The Charter provides the basis for cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. Working with the United Nations, regions must strengthen their potential to resolve disputes and maintain peace and security. Cooperative ventures between the United Nations and regional organizations in the field of peacekeeping, and enhanced interaction on conflict prevention and peacebuilding prove the importance and usefulness of

that partnership. To further strengthen that critical partnership, may I respectfully propose the following.

First, the exchange of information on matters relating to the maintenance of peace and security at the regional level should serve as the backbone for cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations.

Secondly, formal arrangements for collaboration should be concluded between the United Nations and regional organizations to establish clear areas of responsibility and more efficient cooperation. The Secretary-General's 2005 report "In larger freedom" recommended memorandums of understanding to govern such relationships. The Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) signed such a memorandum on 27 September 2007. It may also be recalled that ASEAN was granted observer status in the General Assembly on 4 December 2006.

Thirdly, cooperation between the United Nations and the concerned regional organization should be monitored. Monitoring should be seen as a nurturing process whereby best practices are highlighted for future reference and guidance.

Fourthly, the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, should always endeavour to open all channels of communication and consult with regional organizations.

Regions must play a primary role in the peace and security of their respective areas. ASEAN has concluded several initiatives that have significantly contributed to peace, security and stability in our region. Those include the declaration of a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality in South-East Asia, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, the Declaration of ASEAN Concord, the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, the establishment of the ASEAN Regional Forum, the ASEAN Dialogue Process, the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, and regional actions undertaken in cooperation with the United Nations with regard to Cambodia and Timor-Leste.

We must also take an active interest in developments that relate to efforts to build stronger ties between our respective regions and the United Nations. One pressing issue involving ASEAN and the United Nations is the situation in Myanmar, or Burma. On the issue of Myanmar, the Philippines reiterates that ASEAN should continue to give full support to the good offices role of the Secretary-General in the person of Special Adviser Ibrahim Gambari. For the Philippines, it is our hope that all efforts in our region and here in the United Nations will produce positive and tangible outcomes that will lead to national reconciliation and a peaceful transition to democracy in Myanmar. It is our fervent and hopeful expectation that, to begin that national reconciliation and peaceful transition, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi will be immediately released without any condition or restriction, and that all parties, including the National League for Democracy, will be part of the democratization and constitutional process in Myanmar.

The President: Pursuant to the invitation extended by the Council under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure, I now give the floor to Mr. Yahya Mahmassani, Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States.

Mr. Mahmassani (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank you, Sir, for convening this important debate on the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. I also commend your delegation on assuming the presidency of the Council this month and pay tribute to your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of Ghana, for his outstanding guidance of the Council's work last month.

I would also like to welcome the presence here today of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

This meeting is of special importance in that it seeks to strengthen and activate the capacities and role of regional and subregional organizations as major adjuncts of the United Nations in dealing with various international political and socio-economic issues. The United Nations should act consistently to ensure that the Security Council assumes its primary responsibility in the maintenance of international peace and security. In response to the dangers and threats facing the international community, over the past decade the United Nations has developed new approaches, including, inter alia, establishing and promoting strategic partnerships and cooperative arrangements with regional organizations, including with the League of Arab States, that represent an important collective security mechanisms and play a significant role in the prevention and settlement of disputes.

In that regard, with respect to existing cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, the League of Arab States continues tirelessly to promote international peace and security in the Middle East by taking every possible step to strengthen cooperation with the United Nations; to promote dialogue, confidence-building measures and the peaceful prevention and settlement of conflicts and disputes; and, of course, to build and maintain peace in post-conflict situations.

Based on the geographical and regional interrelationship between the regional organizations and the United Nations, I stress the effective role that the League of Arab States is playing in the maintenance of regional peace and security in coordination with the African Union and the United Nations. We are doing so in the context of the peace negotiations in the Sudan, following up on and addressing the current situation in Darfur, and of efforts to establish peace and stability in Somalia and the Horn of Africa.

The Security Council is faced with unprecedented challenges in maintaining international peace and security. As a result, it is vital for the Council to turn to regional organizations to settle issues in their respective regions and to deal with items that are on the agenda of the Security Council. Regional organizations should be given a participatory role in facing the threats that jeopardize international peace and security. For regional organizations in general and the League of Arab States in particular to play an effective role in maintaining international peace and security the United Nations and the Security Council must strengthen their partnership with those organizations and make optimal use of the obvious capabilities of a number of regional organizations in dealing with and managing international crises, given their comparative advantage and the added value that their actions would bring regionally. There is no doubt that marginalizing or excluding such regional organizations would not serve to advance joint international activities, the success of which depends on concerted international and regional efforts.

In 1992, the Secretary-General developed a peace plan, defining the concept of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations with the belief that this cooperation is an effective way to strengthen United Nations capacities in terms of preventative diplomacy, peacebuilding and peacekeeping. The Security Council has also affirmed the important role of the regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security and called upon those organizations to improve the coordination of their efforts with those of the United Nations. Allow me to recall here the declaration adopted in 1994 by the General Assembly on strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security. Since that time, five high-level meetings have been held between the General Assembly and heads of regional organizations.

In this context, we reiterate the call, launched by the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, for the holding of a conference to discuss questions of international security in the largest possible sense of the term. That would be an opportunity to reaffirm the protective and collective safeguarding of international peace and to address the challenges involved. Regional meetings would be held beforehand to prepare for the larger conference, which could make a major contribution to mobilizing international efforts and to educating worldwide public opinion with respect to the important role of the Council in the maintenance of international peace and security.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. João Salgueiro, Permanent Representative of Portugal, speaking on behalf of the European Union.

Mr. Salgueiro (Portugal): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries Croatia, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as Armenia, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

First of all, may I congratulate you, Sir, on the assumption of your duties as President of this Council and on the organization of this timely debate on a subject of deep interest to the European Union.

The European Union recognizes that the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security lies with the United Nations. The European Union aims at supporting the United Nations, in particular the Security Council, in carrying out its responsibilities and addressing the challenges of

conflict prevention, management and resolution as a way to strengthen effective multilateralism.

Pursuant to Chapter VIII of the Charter, regional and subregional organizations play a central role in the promotion of peace and security, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations. Their preventive diplomacy capabilities and good offices may be used to avoid the occurrence or recurrence of violent conflicts, at both the national and the international levels. They are closer to the realities of the countries and regions and usually have the motivation and willingness to act quickly and effectively, helping to solve conflicts and mitigate their spill-over effects. They are also in a privileged position to support and enhance peacebuilding efforts.

We believe that the long-standing experience of the European Union and its unique nature, multiple instruments and considerable resources can be used in the context of a deeper and broader cooperation with the United Nations, as expressed in resolution 1631 (2005), in areas such as conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, security sector reform, combating terrorism, disarmament and non-proliferation.

The European Union is particularly pleased with the substantive progress in the cooperation between the United Nations and the European Union in crisis management, in particular the signing, in June 2007, of the Joint Statement on United Nations-European Union Cooperation in Crisis Management. Building on the previous Joint Declaration, of September 2003, the new document identifies four concrete areas for further cooperation between the two organizations: planning, training, communication and best practices. The European Union is actively engaged and fully committed to the implementation of the Joint Statement, through specific measures aimed at developing dialogue and the exchange of experience, on a regular basis and at different levels, as well as ensuring coherence between the policies pursued by the United Nations and the European Union. A similar cooperation in conflict prevention has been built in recent years with the Secretariat.

Allow me to refer to a few examples of how the European Union mobilizes its full scope of policies and instruments in a mutually supportive way to reinforce its cooperation with the United Nations and regional organizations in the peace and security continuum, from conflict prevention to peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

In the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy, two operations in 2003 were real and successful tests for the European Union-United Nations relationship: the European Union Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the European Union-led Operation Artemis, carried out in accordance with resolution 1484 (2003), which succeeded in stabilizing the security conditions, improving the humanitarian situation and protecting the civilian population in Bunia, in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In 2006, the European Union-led peacekeeping force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo assisted the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) during the electoral process. That military support has been complemented, since 2005, by two long-term civilian missions to support security sector reform in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The launching of the European Union-led Chad/Central African Republic bridging military operation in support of the United Nations police force in eastern Chad and north-eastern Central African Republic represents a new step in our cooperation and a concrete example of how to maximize synergies and define responsibilities through a clear division of labour. By addressing the regional dimension of the Darfur crisis, the deployment of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad in parallel with the deployment in the Sudan of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur is a necessary step to facilitate a long-lasting solution to violence in the region.

In the Balkans, the European Union's military operations enjoy support from NATO structures in a unique cooperation agreement between the two organizations. In Kosovo, a European team is carrying out preparatory activities, in close cooperation with the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, for the launch, when the conditions have been met, of a European mission in the rule of law sector.

European Union development assistance is equally mobilized. In Darfur, the African Union's peacekeeping force, the African Union Mission in the Sudan, has been financially supported from the start through the African Peace Facility, an original commitment of €250 million, now raised to €385

million, to support African-led peace support operations and to enhance the institutional capacities of the African Union and subregional organizations in relation to peacekeeping and conflict prevention. Besides Darfur, the Facility has supported African peacekeeping efforts through the Multinational Force of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community, the African Union Mission in Somalia and the African Union Mission for Support to the Elections in the Comoros. The sum of €27 million has been committed so far for capacity-building.

The new Instrument for Stability now also contributes to peace and security efforts, with first support being granted to the trust fund for the AU-United Nations Joint Mediation Support Team for Darfur, to the establishment of a United Nations-trained Chadian police component in the context of the aforementioned combined United Nations-EU intervention, as well as, in the case of Somalia, for the planning capacities of the AU Commission. National and regional envelopes of the European Development Fund likewise contribute to the African Peace and Security Architecture at country and subregional levels. Tripartite capacity programmes in association with the United Nations are being considered, notably in West Africa, involving the Economic Community of West African States. European Union development funds are also used worldwide for peacebuilding actions in post-conflict countries.

Support to the African Peace and Security Architecture is a key priority for the European Union and its member States, within the new strategic partnership that the European Union is establishing with the African Union. The European Reinforcement of African Peacekeeping Capacities (EURO-RECAMP) programme and the training of military and police forces involved in United Nations peacekeeping operations, through the programme's contribution to peacekeeping schools in Africa and Europe, also fit within this strategic partnership.

As is widely recognized, the European Union is itself a structure for peace and security in its region, based upon common values of peace, prosperity, good governance, human rights protection and the rule of law. We emphasize these same values in broader international relations.

The European Union takes an active role in enhancing regional cooperation throughout the European continent and its neighbouring regions, making use of mechanisms and policies such as the European Neighbourhood Policy, the Stabilization and Association process and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership — which, by the way, has been holding meetings yesterday and today in Lisbon, bringing together 27 European countries and 10 countries of the eastern and southern Mediterranean area.

The European Union advocates a pragmatic and action-oriented approach, both for EU-United Nations cooperation and in the broader context of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations. In that regard, we would like to present some suggestions on strengthening cooperation between the European Union and the United Nations, such as ensuring a more frequent dialogue between the United Nations and the EU on the maintenance of international peace and security, using the structure of the United Nations Secretariat and the Security Council; enhancing cooperation on aspects of multidimensional peacekeeping, including police, the rule of law and security sector reform; pursuing the establishment of specific coordination and cooperation mechanisms for crisis situations where the United Nations and the European Union are jointly engaged; organizing systematic United Nations-European Union joint lessons-learned exercises following cases of joint operational cooperation; and reinforcing the European Union's participation in the Peacebuilding Commission, drawing on our experience as a leading global player and a major provider of funds for peacebuilding activities.

To conclude, let me reiterate that the European Union will continue to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security in every way possible, in cooperation with the United Nations and with other regional and subregional organizations.

The President: Pursuant to an invitation extended by the Council under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Abdul Wahab, Permanent Observer of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Mr. Wahab: Mr. Minister, it is indeed a great pleasure for my delegation to see you presiding over this important debate. The Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) is proud to have Indonesia as one of its active and important member States.

The evolving nature of present-day conflicts and security challenges transcends national and even regional boundaries. The OIC believes that regional and intergovernmental organizations are better placed to assess the root causes of conflicts and, accordingly, to devise specific strategies to tackle them. They have a greater vested interest, as they are attempting to resolve challenges arising in their own backyard. They also have an intimate understanding of the social, cultural, political and economic underpinnings of such conflicts and have the ability to identify and mobilize existing home-grown mechanisms to address them effectively and efficiently.

It is critical to proactively engage the concerned regional and other intergovernmental organizations from the very early stages, when the signs of instability first begin to appear. For this to happen, greater emphasis must be placed upon multilateralism, where cooperation and dialogue take precedence over unilateralism and division. Just over a month ago, at the beginning of October, the Foreign Ministers of the OIC member States adopted a final communiqué, in which they unanimously reiterated the need for evolving common perceptions and agreed approaches to address both new and existing threats to international peace and security in the context of multilateralism.

The OIC has time and again stated the view that approaching problems solely from the angle of security cannot lead to lasting and comprehensive solutions. Short-term solutions must give way to a proper understanding of the root causes of conflicts, which often lie in political grievances, backwardness and the underdeveloped situation of societies and their need for good governance.

As a mark of the OIC's commitment to address socio-economic problems that often serve as the root causes of conflict, our organization has launched a special fund for poverty alleviation in member States.

The OIC has been mandated by its Ten-Year Programme of Action to strengthen its role in conflict prevention, confidence-building, peacekeeping, conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation through enhanced cooperation with international and regional organizations. In this regard, the Secretary General of the OIC has personally taken an active role with regard to conflict resolution in several countries.

In working actively within the mechanisms of the United Nations, the OIC attaches pre-eminent importance to its association with the Peacebuilding Commission. The OIC will continue to remain actively engaged as the work of the Commission evolves to tackle complex challenges.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to reiterate the essential need for effective multilateralism through political engagement and dialogue, at the highest level and within an atmosphere of mutual respect, as a prerequisite for effective cooperation.

The President: Pursuant to an invitation extended by the Council under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I now give the floor to Her Excellency Mrs. Lila Hanitra Ratsifandrihamanana, Permanent Observer of the African Union.

Mrs. Ratsifandrihamanana (*spoke in French*): Through this message on behalf of the Chair of its Commission, His Excellency Mr. Alpha Oumar Konaré, the African Union welcomes the convening of this meeting. Its relevance is unanimously recognized and we appreciate the initiative. The question for consideration today has in recent years been given significant attention, in particular by the Security Council. That can be seen in the thematic debates to which the Council has always invited us and which have reflected the trust placed in regional organizations with respect to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Of course, before speaking of the role of regional organizations in that area, recognition of the primary responsibility of the Security Council is fundamental. Regional organizations for their part, intervene to help the United Nations and assume their share of the burden as part of the legitimate framework of the Charter of the Organization. They must act quickly in order to immediately stabilize a given situation. They then help to create conditions that are favourable for the deployment by the United Nations of a peacekeeping or peacebuilding operation, as part of a shared role based on complementarity and solidarity.

The increased cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union and its subregional organizations in the area of peacekeeping in Africa is an achievement that should be built upon. We have seen many positive experiences, such as the current deployment of the African Union-United Nations

Hybrid Operation in Darfur, the Security Council-authorized deployment of the African Union Mission in Somalia and the predominant role of the Economic Community of West African States in crisis resolution in Côte d'Ivoire and elsewhere in West Africa.

Because of the concrete concerted action by the United Nations and the African Union in the area of peacekeeping and peacebuilding, important milestones have been put in place in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Comoros, Burundi, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The majority of Security Council resolutions on crises in Africa have been adopted on the basis of recommendations made by the African Union. Finally, the leadership of the African Union is increasingly asserting its role in the coordination of political dialogues and peace talks in crisis situations throughout Africa.

All of those experiences display innovation, flexibility and, above all, the mobilization of the international community. Lessons of course are being learned in order to bring about more effective conflict management and to better coordination among the various levels of the global peace and security architecture.

It is time to implement the commitments already undertaken in various legal instruments in the area of the maintenance of international peace and security, in particular with regard to the United Nations Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union. We must coordinate our initiatives in order to avoid overlapping and duplication of efforts. The African Union-United Nations partnership must be coherent — which requires the harmonization of decision-making procedures, joint strategic analysis and systematic exchanges of information.

(*spoke in English*)

The realization of a peaceful, integrated and progressive Africa is at the very heart of the African Union, as provided for in its Constitutive Act. In order to fully assume that responsibility, the African Union has taken concrete steps to establish a comprehensive continental architecture for the maintenance of peace and security, including the Peace and Security Council itself, the African Union common defence mechanism, the African Stand-by Force, the African continental early warning system and the Panel of the Wise.

The African Union, as members are aware, has fully demonstrated its readiness to assume its share of responsibility in the maintenance of international peace and security through its efforts in various situations. These were duly authorized by the Security Council and were conducted with the material, logistical and financial support of international partners. African Union member States have shown enthusiasm in responding to calls for troops and other personnel, as a strong mark of their own commitment to international peace and security. Using various mechanisms and working in close cooperation with its subregional organizations, the African Union continues to devote significant efforts and leadership to address crises around the continent.

One of the realities that have emerged from the field experience of the African Union is the crucial need for a sustainable mechanism for funding peacekeeping operations conducted by regional organizations on behalf of the Security Council. Our shared aspiration — the establishment of a United Nations mechanism, under Chapter VIII of the Charter — reflects the constant desire of the Council itself to strengthen regional organizations as key partners in the effective discharge of its responsibilities.

The absence of a predictable mechanism to support peacekeeping efforts of regional organizations may create an atmosphere conducive to the escalation of hostilities. Also, delays in responding to a crisis often result in the dislocation of the social fabric of communities. This means that the most credible and immediate opportunities for early peacemaking may be lost, necessitating long, complex and expensive peace processes at a later stage, as we have seen the cases of Somalia and the Sudan. The Rwandan genocide remains an indelible mark on our collective memory concerning the lack of an early and effective response to a crisis situation.

In that light, we therefore wish to reiterate our call to the Security Council to take all necessary measures to give greater impetus to the effective establishment of a United Nations mechanism for funding peacekeeping operations conducted on its behalf by regional organizations. The Council is very familiar with the strengths which regional organizations bring. Our ability to fully leverage them will be crucial for the effectiveness of the emerging

partnership in the maintenance of international peace and security.

(*spoke in French*)

In conclusion, the debate that the Council has begun accords with our aspiration to cooperate resolutely with the United Nations, and in particular with the Security Council, in the maintenance of international peace and security. The Council's initiative, above all, parallels the aspirations of all African men and women to live in a world of harmony and well-being.

The President: Pursuant to an invitation extended by the Council under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Nurbek Jeenbaev, Permanent Representative of Kyrgyzstan to the United Nations, who will speak on behalf of the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

Mr. Jeenbaev (Kyrgyzstan) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on becoming President of the Security Council, and I wish you all possible success in this responsible post.

In speaking today, representing the country chairing the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), I would like to note the importance of the Indonesian delegation's timely convening of this meeting on the role of regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security. We are convinced that under your skilful leadership, Sir, the Council will achieve successful results. Please allow me, Minister Wirajuda, on behalf of the Secretary-General of the CSTO, Mr. Bordyuzha, who because of certain obligations was unable to come to New York, to convey words of appreciation for your invitation to him to participate in today's meeting.

The Collective Security Treaty Organization welcomes the opportunity offered by these debates to speak on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, as well as on ways to broaden the impact of such cooperation for the successful attainment of our purposes and goals. We note the importance of improving coordination between the United Nations and regional organizations, and we share the interest in finding ways to improve this coordination as part of the continuing search for joint efforts to identify useful and effective methods to ensure international peace and security. We are convinced that the work of regional and subregional organizations in peacekeeping, with skilful implementation, could help to strengthen possibilities and encourage success in achieving the various critically important purposes of the United Nations.

Today, regional organizations are assigned an important role in conflict prevention and settlement, as well as in post-conflict peacebuilding. Geographical proximity and close historical and cultural ties between their members give regional organizations comparative advantages in better understanding the root causes of regional conflict and in more successfully seeking peaceful solutions to those problems. Recent operations of the United Nations in support of peace have been implemented in close cooperation between the Organization and regional and subregional organizations.

In this regard, I would like to briefly report on recent decisions by the CSTO in the area of peacekeeping.

The Collective Security Council of the CSTO confirms its efforts to ensure collective security and stability within the purview of CSTO and states its commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, to the decisions of the United Nations Security Council and to the generally recognized norms of international law. Given the importance of ensuring effective participation of the CSTO and its member States in efforts to maintain international peace and security, and considering that the participation of the CSTO in peacekeeping activities is an effective instrument for strengthening its international positions, authority and political influence in global and regional affairs, and also on the basis of our founding documents, on 6 October 2007 in Dushanbe, the CTSO approved the agreement on CSTO peacekeeping activity.

Additionally, the Collective Security Council of the CSTO adopted a decision on documents for a normative and organizational structure, within the CSTO, of a peacekeeping mechanism, including a provision for collective peacekeeping forces of the CSTO, a provision on an operations working group to prepare CSTO peacekeeping operations and a provision on the chief of the CSTO peacekeeping mission.

The President: There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list for this meeting. I intend with the concurrence of members of the Council to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 12.55 p.m.